

INTEGRITY



...FOR SPACIOUS SKIES, FOR AMBER WAVES OF GRAIN."

JULY, 1947

SUBJECT - AMERICA

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EDITORIAL



AMERICA today stands upon the threshold of maturity. Her virtues are the virtues of youth. Her potentialities are great for either good or evil. No other country has been blessed as she is blessed in the good things of the earth. A child of Europe, nurtured by its culture and its people to a position of enviable self-sufficiency, she stands now in a position to assume the headship of nations.

Unlike Europe, who fed long at the paps of the Church, America is a bottle baby. She has been weaned on a formula of synthetic spirituality. Despite her physical strength, there is good reason to fear that the necessary spiritual stamina is lacking to carry the load that history has placed upon her. When there is a job to be done, she will do it. We saw that in the last war. It is in vision that she is lacking, and in leadership. America is a lush wilderness looking for a voice.

There are two ways of looking at America. The flattering view is the relative one. Compared to a devastated, bankrupt, despairing Europe, our country really is the land of opportunity that Jerem O'Sullivan-Barra describes in DEAR SIR AND BROTHER.

If the rest of the articles in this issue seem jaundiced or cynical or negative by comparison with the first one, it is because their writers see America in relation to her own unrealized potentialities, her own sins and shortcomings, and the price she may soon have to pay for them.

We begin this month a series of spiritual portraits of American cities, which we shall continue in future issues. After all, America is our native land, and the home of our apostolate, so we must study it in detail.

May the Immaculate Conception, to Whom our fair land is dedicated, help us Americans to become without spot before God.

THE EDITORS.

Dear Sir and Brother

For those who are not members of unions, it may be necessary to explain the above title is the salutation used by one American workman to another as members of a labor union. The salutation is symbolic of a very real brotherhood and even of a Christian unity of many races who work together in a single nation. "Sir and Brother" gives some inkling of the very basic *Credo* of America regarding the dignity and the work of each individual boilermaker and of the equality of each boilermaker before his God. The very fact that a man is a boilermaker or a fireman or an oiler or a bus driver is the basis of his dignity and gives him the right to be called Sir as well as Brother. This salutation of Sir and Brother seems to be a part and an expression of the American Dream.

The American Dream

Americans have behind them and in front of them, a great expanse of vision known as the American Dream. For someone who has not lived in America, or who, having lived here, has not entered into the stream of life of our nation, the American Dream may be just a phrase to represent a fiction. To Americans who have lived in other countries where traditions and standards are different, and whose economies are limited and closed, the American Dream is a breathing reality that takes on an actuality in one's daily thinking.

To describe this dream is a task beyond my capacity. Perhaps I can light up a few facets of it. It means that a boy can work his way through college by washing dishes. It means that idleness is not equated with gentility or with position, and that steady work is accepted as an admirable way of life. It means that an American man is not ashamed, but rather, proud, of his sweaty brow and grease-stained overalls. It means that a Child's Restaurant waitress sits down to eat at the table next to the customer and has the same choice of food. It means that an American youth can face his future with an aplomb and careless courage born of at least a tradition of limitless opportunities. It means many more things tangible and intangible, but no one who is seeking an explanation of the achievements and present position of our nation, and of the general attitudes and aptitudes of our fellow citizens, can rule out of the discussion the actuality of the American Dream.

So many local, national, and international spokesmen have taken it upon themselves to deal critically with American life and character, that it seems opportune to underline some of the positive and benevolent aspects of the American people, and of the way of life they have set up in this nation of nations.

Our Immunity to Our Own Diseases

Perhaps the most salient characteristic of the ordinary American is his toughness and power of resistance. Americans who have not lived abroad may possibly wonder why this point is discussed first, or discussed at all. Foreign countries feel they know American culture and mores. After all, they have seen American movies. Long-legged girls dance in unison to vapid love songs played by an eighty-eight piece band. Puppy-love is glorified for all the world to see. The meatier aspects of life are all ground down to a tasteless hamburger before they pass to the American screen. The spiritual aspects of life are quite consistently ignored or are prettied up until they approach an unbearable saccharinity. Foreigners also hear our radio programs, or reasonable facsimiles of them imitated on local radio stations. They hear recordings of American jazz and ask for translations of the words of our popular songs. Then of course, they saw our business men on dedicated quests for profit, and immediately classified all Americans as beings hypnotized by the almighty dollar.

Not even the transcendence of our technology during the war years, nor the bravery and efficiency of Americans drafted into battle, has radically changed the ideas of the rest of the world about us. Non-Americans, and particularly Europeans of the educated groups, think of us as slaves to the dollar, to ridiculous movies, to fantastic radio commercials, to enticing advertisements, to compelling boogie-woogie music. The happy fact is that while it is certainly true that some Americans, particularly city-dwellers, and the young, have fallen under the influence of such cultural forces as the movies, the ordinary American has developed over the years a really magnificent power of resistance. Merely because a pain remedy is advertised as, "Just like a doctor's prescription because it contains many ingredients," does not prevent him from consulting a doctor when he is ill. What the American accepts most heartily from his radio are jokes, and he is happy indeed when the jokes satirize the radio itself. It would probably surprise program-makers very much to learn how many Americans share the feelings of Lee de Forest, whose inventions made radio possible: "What have you gentlemen done with my child?", he asked the National Association of Broadcasters. "He was conceived as a potent instrumentality for culture, fine music, the uplifting of America's mass intelligence. You have debased this child, you have sent him out on the streets in rags of ragtime, tatters of jive and boogie-woogie, to collect money from all and sundry for hubba hubba and audio jitterbug. You have made of him a laughing stock to intelligence, surely a stench in the nostrils of the gods of ionosphere; you have cut out time into tiny cubelets,

Legion of the Lukewarm

Notice, the Holy Spirit says that we *make* God vomit us out by our lukewarmness. Why do you think that is? Why should God tell us that He would prefer us to be cold rather than lukewarm? Certainly He does not want us to sin. The answer is to be found in the words of Jesus, when He told the Pharisees: "I came to save sinners." Did He mean He had not come to save all men, even the Pharisees? Certainly the Mercy of God is for all. But observe the occasion of this utterance. He says this to the Pharisees when they are scandalized because He associates with sinners.

Why were they scandalized? Because they regarded themselves just men. But if they were made just by God, why could not that same God make other sinners just? Therefore they looked upon themselves as just, not as sinners made just by God, but as men who had justified themselves without God. And those were the men He could not save, those whose hearts were so hardened by hypocrisy that they could not even so much as think that they needed to be redeemed. But Christ could save sinners like Magdalen, like Matthew, like Peter, — because, through their sin, they knew that they needed to be saved, that they could do nothing without God. And God saves all who ask to be saved, those ask who are not smug in their own virtues.

The lukewarm, who are neither cold nor hot, then, are those who are abandoned neither to God nor to sin. Instead, they keep up just enough of external observance to prevent themselves from being disturbed by their sins, enough to destroy the knowledge of their poverty—by which God calls them to Himself.

The world today is made up pretty much of those who are lukewarm, who are, as they think, neither very much for Christ, nor very much against Him. Particularly among the educated, so-called, the leaders of society. And He is ready to vomit them out of His mouth. These are the men who cry "peace, peace, and there is no peace." Why is there no peace? they ask. They are truly puzzled. Are we not men of good will, all seeking peace? Why then is there no peace? What more could we do to bring about this peace? Listen very carefully to the answer of God, as He speaks in the hatred and war that surround us: IF YOU SAY THAT YOU ARE MEN OF GOOD WILL, SEEKING PEACE, YET YOU FIND NO PEACE, WHAT DOES THAT MAKE OF ME? DO YOU NOT SAY, IN THESE VERY WORDS, THAT I AM A MONSTER WHO, WHEN HIS SON ASKS FOR BREAD, HAND HIM A STONE. HYPOCRITES THAT YOU ARE, WHY DO YOU NOT LOOK INTO YOUR OWN HEARTS, TO ACCUSE YOURSELVES, BEFORE YOU ACCUSE YOUR GOD? BUT, RATHER THAN ACCUSE YOURSELVES, YOU WILL DENY MY VERY MERCY, THE MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL MY ATTRIBUTES, TO SHOW YOU WHICH I SUFFERED EVERY CONCEIVABLE SUFFERING. AT LEAST, THEN, CONFESS TO YOURSELVES AND TO ME THAT YOU DO NOT SEEK PEACE. THEN ASK ME, IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR OWN POVERTY, AND I WILL GIVE YOU PEACE—BECAUSE I WILL GIVE YOU MYSELF.

Yes, it is a fact, as all of us who have tried just a little to love God must know, it is a fact that we cannot love Him of ourselves. This is the knowledge, the reward He gives us when we begin to try to love Him, the knowledge of our

abysmal pride and hypocrisy, by which we would not hesitate to use anything to glorify ourselves. What, then, is this strange convention which overwhelms us, by which we assume that we can be men of good will without God, without Christ? Why are we so afraid of our own weakness, we who are the children of a God Who brought us back from the dead? For surely we are afraid to admit our culpability for fear of the punishment.

What Is a Neurotic?

Our age, we are told, is "neurotic." There is much talk about the devastating tempo of our lives, and our common language is filled with the terms of psychiatry. But what is the trouble, in the simplest terms? The psychiatrists know very well. They call it by different names, inferiority complex, guilt complex, Oedipus complex, always a complex. But the thing they name is one and the same. Do you know what it is?

Why is it, whatever else it may be called, always a complex? Because it is complicated, not simple; a complex, not a simplex. St. Paul had a "complex" once too. That was what God told him when He said: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? . . . I am Jesus, whom Saul persecutes. This is a thankless task of thine, kicking against the goad." Having a complex is kicking against the goad, seeking peace by violating our consciences. Yes, having a "complex," in the language of earlier times, when men used to call things by their right names, is being a liar. But being a liar is a very different thing from telling a lie. For when we tell a lie, merely, we know that we are lying with perfect objectivity. But when we become habitual liars, we not only lie about this or that, we lie about ourselves: we tell ourselves we are not liars. That is the genesis of the *complex*, and we all have complexes because we are all liars about ourselves: we tell ourselves, and we assume with one another, that we are truthful men. Yet we know, at the bottom of our hearts, unless those hearts are utterly hardened, that we are not truthful. And, because we make ourselves out honest and truthful, we make God Himself a liar. That is the hypocrisy that God Himself cannot convert to Himself — because it denies God, because it denies His Mercy.

And so the psychiatrists tell us about our complexes, but they do not tell us that we are liars. That would be crude, and they could hardly expect persons to pay for being told that. And the truth is (in defense of the psychiatrists) that, if they did tell them, their patients would not believe it. Because they really are complicated. Being complicated, they don't know, very clearly, that is, that they are liars. And so it wouldn't do very much good to tell them. It might do a lot of harm in fact.

The reason is that lying is more an effect than a cause. No one wants to be a liar, really. No one wants anything bad as such. For example, take a more shocking kind of sin, say murder. No one murders simply for the sake of destroying a human life. Why in the world would anyone want to destroy life for its own sake? (That is a terrible habit moderns have fallen into, to conceive sin as though it were desirable for its own sake.) But the truth is that, when we sin, it is always because we want some good. The man who murders does not will death for itself; he wants the money of the man he is going to kill, or the satisfaction to his wounded pride, or something else, but he wants something positive: death is simply a way of getting it—chosen, probably, because

vices that dot the country. Here is still the independent worker, even owning his own tools and often his center of operations.

On the farms, in the one-man businesses, the essential spirit of America is not lost. The sense of independence, of freedom, of individual worth and dignity, all are very much alive. Among those who work for wages, there is no less sureness of individual dignity. That factory workers, transportation workers, carpenters and others must sell their work in exchange for money has not yet made them as much slaves to the dollar sign as critics of the U.S. would try to maintain. It is only necessary to go among the American working people to collect for a cause, any worthy cause, to learn the real spirit of Americans. It is true that they have worked hard for their dollars, but they part with them easily and carelessly for almost any cause—for a starving Polish child, for a German child, for the Red Cross, for a new church, etc., etc. There is among them an inexhaustible well of sympathy and generosity that not even the oft-reiterated tenets of capitalistic thrift, or capitalistic spendthriftiness have been able to dam up or vitiate.

To some who have studied the long-term effects of capitalism on workers where the capitalistic system is entrenched, the aspect of the American workman is heartening in its independence and courage. As is well-known, the miners of England and Wales are the basic factors in the support of capitalistic economy of the island kingdom. The writer studied them during the depression years, after many of them had been on the dole for long periods. There was little struggle left in them. They were in the main content to be on the dole, and eked out their pittance by catching rabbits and growing vegetables for the family stewpot. The moral degradation of the half-unemployed Welsh villages was often unspeakable, and the men, who after all, had known nothing but the daily discipline of the pit from their early teens, rarely branched out into other work, or invented little services, or ploughed up fallow land, or cooperatively entered into any land schemes with their fellow-victims. It is true that their resources were pitifully slim, but they had been so successfully dehumanized by a long history of exploitation in mines that the full play of their human faculties seem to be stunted.

No such capitalistic discipline cramps the initiative of Americans in similar situations. They always have a faith in tomorrow, in their future, and in themselves—their power to master circumstances. Even the Okies, dispossessed of homes, of land, and of tools, felt that tomorrow would bring them a new life—so they moved on to find tomorrow. It is true that this faith is often more than a little naive, but it is a faith founded on some reality; the unbroken spirits of American workmen, (in or out of depression) and the great untapped resources of our blessed land.

The Most Beautiful Building is the School

The emphasis that is placed on the formation of the individual in the American scene is a prime phenomenon of our culture. In motor-ing through a typical American town, one can note that in general, the most beautiful building is the school. It is often more beautiful than the local Post Office, and more sturdily constructed than the movie house. Lest country children plead illiteracy on account of distances from the school or on account of weather, regular bus service picks up the children and deposits them safely at home at the end of the school day. High schools are free, and state colleges demand only a small sacrifice of work and extra effort of even the poorest student who wishes to earn a degree. There has rarely been in history a more education-centred culture. Of course, our education system could be improved, but the emphasis on education shows that a secular society is acting according to its own highest principles, and the plant for doing a good job of schooling has already been erected. Certain dedicated souls are already at work proving the inadequacies of our teaching system and of our educational goals. New solutions, integrating the lessons of the past with the needs of the present, are emerging from such studies. As the complexity of our culture and economic system bring more observable tensions, it is to be hoped that educational leaders steeped in truth and idealism will help bring to a real flowering the greatest experiment in mass education that the world has ever seen.

Childishness and Good Will

If there is one quality that distinguishes adult Americans from nationals of other countries, it is a certain childishness that is apparent in their attitudes and behaviour. This childishness could only arise in a country where living is not too hard, where manners are elastic, where rigidity of social codes is replaced by an easygoing acceptance of many patterns of behaviour. Naturally, there are prescribed limits, because America too has a definable pattern of accepted social behaviour (I am referring to surface manners and mannerisms rather than morals) but the latitude is ample enough to permit of wide variation. In older cultures, the classes and professions harden, and those who belong must conform to certain age-hallowed formulas. In the newer police states, the necessity of being constantly watchful if one wishes to remain sound of wind and limb, makes for the opposite of the careless, childish attitude exhibited by the majority of Americans.

The childishness shows itself in many ways: in the playfulness generally associated with youngsters; in easy laughter; in an openness in telling about one's life history and aims; in a tendency to oversimplify even the most complex matters, both national and international; and, most important, in an undifferentiated good will,—the good will that

a well-washed, well-fed, plump, child has for people and things that surround it. In passing, it might be well to note that our good will may be turned to all kinds of things, just as a child may with the best will in the world drop the baby on the floor in playing doll with it. It was indeed with good will, and without malice or hatred, that we dropped the atom bombs. Our childishness is a help in our thinking and planning—we never think small, or plan small, but think and plan big, just as children do. But we are children gifted with a fantastically wonderful technology, and we can make our big plans come through to reality. Cautious adults are apt to be abashed by schemes of formidable magnitude; not so most young Americans. Very little in this world can serve to abash them; they are willing to try anything once. This open-soul childishness makes Americans anything but a petty people. It is well, however, to keep in mind the distinction between childishness and childlikeness. If Americans were more truly childlike in humility, in simple wisdom, in joy, they could become a people of great vision. We are not *as little children* . . . but childish. We are immature and irresponsible. Either we shall grow up to the splendid manhood our idealism presages, or we shall become irresponsibly brutal in the manner of undisciplined children turned into little brats.

Perhaps the most heartening thing about our life in the United States is that despite all influences to the contrary, right principles and good examples are still honored. Self-sacrifice and service to others are still held up as ideals, at least on commencement day. They have not even lost their context in Christianity. Fidelity in marriage, stability in home life are still honored—if only in the *breach*. The freedom of the individual and the protection of his rights as a child of God are part of our deepest patterns of thinking. This of course, inevitably brings up our weakest point, the racism that relegates many of our Negro fellow-citizens to a second-class citizenship, and acts to prevent the integration into our culture of our Jewish, Mexican or Puerto-Rican brothers. Though we have far to travel, we are on the road to real equality. The principles under which we will attain this equality have been preserved for us, and are active in our culture. We can still protest, we can work for our brothers-in-Christ without let or hindrance, so the fault is ours if progress in the combatting of racism is not more rapid.

To the Catholic whose heart goes out in love for his country, much of what goes into the American Dream would seem to be firmly embedded in the Judaea-Christian and Catholic tradition of the sacredness of the personality of each and every human being. If the Catholic opposes certain aspects of our development, he would only oppose them

as overgrowths on a strong, sound and healthy plant. If he has any apostolic zeal in him, the thought of the harvest to be gained in the United States is a continuous goad to his spirit. Here is a people, surrounded by the worst examples of monopoly capitalism, of incitements to concupiscence, self-indulgence, and sin; where press, radio and movies have already become mere voices for materialism; where factory work with its division of labor tries to rob man of his humanity. Here is a people whose power of resistance and toughness of spiritual fibre have allowed a large amount of immunization as against ever-present disease. Here is a people marked by generosity in the midst of a culture ordered to profit, a people characterized by openhearted childishness, by love and respect for education, by the continued regard for true principles of conduct though powerful forces assail them—a people who have refused to fall victims to the evils that have entered our system of life.

The Apostolate

If we as Catholics have some things that we know to be good, it is our duty to offer them to our fellow-citizens. They may of course, refuse them, but if we love them as brothers, we must do all in our power to share with them those treasures that we prize most in the world. If we go to them in smugness, we shall arouse only suspicion. If we do not really strip ourselves of money and any desire for power, we may frighten them into thinking that our ultimate aim is not the kingdom of God on earth, but merely some new and glorified Tammany whereby Catholicism might wield a more sure political influence.

If we know our own message well enough to be fools for Christ, to go unarmed with anything but the mantle of love and pity, we shall win many who are wandering about, stunned by the confusions of the day, and waiting for the Word. The freedoms of our land are with us. If we want to start a paper, a magazine, a farming commune, a cooperative, a hostel, or if we only want to visit the sick, the fatherless, the widow, and him who is in bonds, we can start as soon as our energies and possibilities permit. There are no restrictive laws to prevent us. The Apostolate is ours to accept or refuse. Dear Sirs and Brothers, have you ever heard of the Catholic Dream?

JEREM O'SULLIVAN-BARRA.

Why Aren't Americans Contemplative

When Mother Mary Magdalen Bentivoglio, foundress of the Poor Clares in the United States, applied for permission to make a foundation in Philadelphia in 1876, the diocesan council refused on the grounds that such a convent was "not in conformity with the spirit of the people."

That was nearly a century ago, and an isolated instance, but it expresses an antipathy to the contemplative life which persists, affecting both the Catholic and non-Catholic population, although differently. We like our saints to be "normal people." We prefer Thomas More sans hair shirt and St. Francis minus the stigmata. Contraception does not seem *unnatural*, even to many Catholics who refrain from it, but contemplative nuns do seem unnatural. We are more at ease with an aspirant millionaire than with one who hopes to become a saint.

"Why aren't Americans contemplative?" is not an idle question, like "Why do Americans prefer coffee to tea?" It isn't a matter of idiosyncrasy, or national temperament or genius, it is much the same as saying "Why aren't Americans godly people?" A distaste for contemplation is at the root of the so-called "American Heresy," of Modernism and of Naturalism. None of these heresies has actually been pinned on American Catholics, but they are certainly rife among non-Catholics in the United States and have no doubt contaminated the Catholic population.

We hope to show in this paper that there is a real antagonism between the American Way of Life as commonly understood and practiced, and sanctity.

The likely saints in America's past (with some notable exceptions such as Mother Seton) have not been conspicuous in the main stream of our country's development. Most were early missionaries, nearly all were foreign born. Mother Cabrini certainly led a hidden life in a New York and Chicago where everyone had heard of her contemporary, J. P. Morgan. Americans until now have been supremely anti-mystical. It looks as though the tide is changing, both among the Catholics and the non-Catholics (who, when they do not find the Church, go in for a false mysticism, jumbling up Theosophy with St. John of the Cross, or deep breathing with Dr. Emmet Fox). It is good to see an ex-Communist poet leave the New Yorker staff for a Trappist monastery. It is good to learn of the ordination of another Trappist who has a background of Judaism, Psychiatry and the University of Chicago. Most of the Carmels are full. The contemplative Benedictines are making a foundation in Bethlehem, Connecticut, and

land is being prepared for the Trappistines. Among those in the lay apostolate, especially in Catholic Action, there is the conviction that all things will not be restored in Christ unless they themselves advance toward contemplation. With all these signs it is not unreasonable to hope that we shall one day as a nation realize that to be anti-contemplative is to be truly un-American.

What is Contemplation?

The reason that it is so important that contemplation not be considered "un-American" is that contemplation is the *normal process of salvation*, so that he who will have none of it, in reality refuses to approach God. Contemplation is the beginning here on earth of the Beatific Vision. It is *a simple, intuitional grasp of the religious order of things*, and it admits of many degrees between its beginning, early in the life of prayer, and its end in the Beatific Vision.

Salvation is not a matter of doing good deeds or of avoiding mortal sin, it is a matter of sharing God's Life. Thomistic theologians, like Garrigou-Lagrange, teach that the development of the interior life as described by St. John of the Cross is in essence (though not in degree) the same and equally necessary for *everyone*, so that if we neglect to begin it here and yet manage to save our souls, we are going to have a long period of purification in Purgatory. Furthermore, if the body of Christians on earth fails to cultivate the interior life and to advance seriously on the road toward God, the strength of that body will be negligible, and the spiritual health of the nation will be adversely affected. Indeed our spiritual state is reflected in our national conduct. We are the nation which dropped the atomic bomb (and has not yet repented it). We are the nation which characteristically operates on principles of expediency rather than morality. We are the nation which is famous not for the Cross, but for the dollar sign.

The Active Life and the Contemplative Life

The reason why we Americans are not contemplative is usually put this way, that Americans are *active* people (we get things done) and that activists are the opposite of contemplative.

Certain temperaments, such as the melancholic, incline more by nature than others to the life of the spirit and therefore to contemplation. Conversely, the "shallow" temperaments are more given to things of the body than to things of the mind; to things of the world than to things of the spirit. Superficially it seems as though Americans incline by national temperament to the earthy, but the influence is more than likely not temperament but the prevailing materialism. We are not racially or temperamentally homogeneous.

On the road to salvation, grace, not temperament, is the all-important factor. Physically energetic people are as touched by grace as those who like to sit around and think. God must become progressively and equally insistently the center of everyone's life.

However, the active and contemplative types will manifest differently the divine life within them. The difference will be marked not by the degree of charity each attains, nor by the fact that one will pray and the other not (both will pray, although the contemplative will spend more time at it). The real difference will be marked by the difference in the gifts of the Holy Ghost which will predominate in each. In the contemplative the gifts of wisdom and understanding will be especially prominent; in the active person it will be the gifts of fortitude, counsel and knowledge which will be uppermost. This predominance of different gifts is what marks the difference between the sanctity of a Don Bosco and the sanctity of a St. Teresa. It is what should mark the difference between a saintly statesman, nurse or teacher, and a Trappist. The comparison is more clearly seen in those advanced in prayer and holiness because their lives are more noticeably under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Are Americans Really Active?

There is another relationship between activity and contemplation which applies especially to beginners. A truly active life on the natural level prepares for contemplation, which in turn will give rise to better activity.

What is this truly active life? It is activity according to moral virtue, as opposed to what St. Thomas calls the active life of pleasure, or life according to the senses. One cannot escape the realization that much of our American activity is the active life according to sensibility and pleasure. For instance, all the frantic haste and energy which goes into money-making as a last end is activity of this type; all the way from running for the 8:17 train to the business conference in the afternoon. The much-vaunted American efficiency fits into the same category, and that is really why we tend to despise it. So much punctuality, so much exactitude, so much precision—for what? Then consider the energy Americans give to sports when they really go in for sports. The tennis match and the golf game are the active life of pleasure, although they may be meritorious if accessory to a life of moral virtue, though apparently they seldom are. Take, finally, the energy we devote to expediency, that contemporary substitute for moral virtue. What a lot of energy has gone into Planned Parenthood! What a lot of racing back and forth in airplanes there is among statesmen who cannot be said to proceed with international affairs along the path of moral virtue.

On the other hand, in some ways Americans are not even active, but shockingly passive.

We never walk if we can ride. We have gadgets to keep from developing skills, elevators to eliminate the necessity of climbing stairs, *spectator* sports, radios instead of musicians. Our passivity is most conspicuous and deplorable in the intellectual sphere. We work at jobs without ever thinking, and indeed there is usually nothing to think about. We passively accept all our opinions pre-digested.

Where Integration Comes In

This is where integration comes in. When we say that Catholics should have an integrated life we are really saying that they should exchange a passive life, or an active life of pleasure or sensibility, for an active life according to the moral virtues, and that this life according to the moral virtues will put them in line for contemplation, which is the route that they should be traveling toward God.

The basis of an active life according to moral virtue is an intellectual comprehension of the relationship between religion and work, family, recreation, reading and all the other phases of daily life. If there is no synthesis between religion and life a man will be blundering around in the dark, and will save his soul only through ignorance of the undone duty (if he can still manage an invincible ignorance). Meanwhile our country will not be appreciably bettered by such negative candidates for Heaven.

Is Piety Contemplation?

There is no doubt but that American Catholics are pious. They stream in and out of churches, are very devotional. The number of Communion is impressive.

Piety, in the popular sense, is largely a matter of external activity—vocal prayer and pious exercises. It is good, of course. But of itself it stands in the relation of peripheral activity to the real interior life. Contemplation does not usually begin until after a period of meditation, and most devout Catholics have not yet even learned to meditate. The fact that many Americans seem to prefer a novena to Mass is indicative that their piety really is on the external and sensible level. You get out of devotions what you put into them, whereas the Sacraments give grace of themselves and are therefore much to be preferred. As for the Americans who frequent Communion and yet do not develop an interior life, their difficulty lies chiefly in that lack of integration which prevents the full exercise of the moral virtues.

Why Aren't Americans Contemplative?

I. Materialism

Looked at from the underside, the advance toward God is a

progressive detachment from creatures. The "dark nights" of which the mystics speak are purifications in this regard which God arranges. They are for people who are already on the contemplative road. Those who have not yet reached the beginnings of contemplation have to do the first and obvious detaching themselves. They have to mortify themselves in order to lift themselves up from a life bound to the senses so that their spiritual life can get started. This is really the first step: we have to stop loving the things of this world.

Now it is right here that religion and the American Way of Life are at odds. "We're spoiled, thank God," say the advertisements. Don't thank God, thank the Devil. God it is who gave us abundance, but it is the Devil who has encouraged us to waste it, to wallow in it, to talk endlessly about it, to forget Who gave it to us, to cherish it and to lay up treasures of it on earth which may prevent our getting to Heaven.

Every man has his own struggle against concupiscence. What is vicious in America as presently constituted is that our way of life heaps temptations in a man's path, whereas a godly society, recognizing man's weakness and looking to his salvation, would forbid the exploitation of concupiscence in the interests of avarice. Advertising is the ordinary and most flagrant instrument of our temptation; but advertising is not an isolated phenomenon, it is only the instrument of an industrial-capitalist system which has had to turn to the home market. It cajoles us into buying what we don't need and what is harmful to the salvation of our souls. It cajoles, and that works, but every once in a while one senses the iron hand of force behind the velvet glove of invitation. It is almost as though we were being *made* to consume in order to keep feeding a monstrously destructive system. As long as our economic system (the tentacles of which are twisted around everything from politics to publishing) is ordered to money as its last end, so long will the spirit of contemplation and the American Way of Life be at odds. There are not enough people yet who have declined to be exploited, so as to disturb the profiteers. But if there were a widespread wave of penance then we would see people showing their colors.

Why Aren't Americans Contemplative?

II. Spiritual Blindness

Spiritual blindness is a disease of intellectuals, those people who are the most likely to have escaped the lure of materialism. It is about the worst thing that would happen to those whose lives center in the mind.

First, what is it? It is a *punishment* inflicted by God for intellectual

sins. The sins are intellectual curiosity and pride. The punishment consists in this: that God takes away His light from the minds of those who do not wish to receive it, abandoning them to the darkness which Original Sin and their own sins pull down upon them. Spiritual blindness is characterized *not* by ignorance of facts (which is a relatively clear and easily remediable state), *nor* by native stupidity, but by confusion of thought and defect of judgment. Those who suffer from it are the blind guides of Scripture, who strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel (who have every comma in place in an article rife with internal inconsistencies, who concentrate on the artistic elements in pornographic statuary, who feature the delivery of morally bad poetry, and worry about only the *medical* aspects of venereal disease). Garrigou-Lagrange says of spiritual blindness: "It takes all penetration away from us and leaves us in a state of spiritual dullness, which is like the loss of all higher intelligence."

There are several ways of recognizing spiritual blindness. It is chiefly marked by mental confusion and the inability to recognize implications and contradictions. It also consists in a preference for discussing the trivial over the important, the material rather than the spiritual. It is common among teachers in secular colleges, among liberal Protestant clergymen, among Catholic intellectuals who have higher degrees in social studies, and among Catholics generally who try to serve God and Mammon. It is the obvious punishment of those who lightly disregard the Church's prohibitions in the matter of books and movies.

Let us take a gross example of spiritual blindness. Several years ago an inter-faith organization had a brotherhood campaign. They proposed to raise several million dollars to establish a research project to determine the bases of brotherhood (money and research discovered the atomic bomb, why not brotherhood?), after which they were going to arrange to have same taught in colleges. Now there may exist some simple child of a scientific age so ignorant of religion as to suppose that brotherhood is a fit subject for a research project, or to suppose that the basis of brotherhood has not long since been known and ignored, but such cannot be said of the clergy. "Woe to you, blind guides!"

Evidence of spiritual blindness is at every hand. The double-talk of the radio. The nonsense written in most magazines. The learned palaver of the schools. The fine speeches of statesmen.

Spiritual blindness is the inverse, the opposite of contemplation. As contemplation is characterized by a simple intellectual grasp of truth, so this blindness is marked by multiplicity. It accounts, for instance, for the rash of facts and statistics gathered in contemporary

America. Vast amounts of money and energy have been channeled in this direction without adding to anyone's wisdom. People given to this collect thousands of uncorrelated, mechanically arranged facts. They have a lust for stuffing more and more information into already overcrowded memories, without ever going to the heart of any matter. Instead of the passivity of the contemplative gaze, the spiritually blind are always restless in their pursuit of knowledge, reading magazines, attending lectures, weighing the latest theory propounded by the latest paper read at the latest assemblage of experts, joining the book-of-the-month-club, keeping up with this and that.

Let us examine the sins which precipitate the punishment of spiritual blindness. They are two: curiosity and pride.

Curiosity

"Curiosity is a defect of our mind, which inclines us with eagerness and precipitation toward the consideration and study of less useful subjects, making us neglect the things of God and our salvation . . . whereas people who have little learning but are nourished with the Gospel possess great rectitude of judgment, there are others who, far from nourishing themselves profoundly with the great Christian truths, spend a great part of their time carefully storing up useless, or at least only slightly useful, knowledge which does not at all form the judgment. They are afflicted with almost a mania for collecting. Theirs is an accumulation of knowledge mechanically arranged and unorganized, somewhat as if it were in a dictionary. This type of work, instead of training the mind, smothers it, as too much wood smothers a fire. Under this jumble of accumulated knowledge, they can no longer see the light of first principles, which alone could bring order out of all this material and lift up their souls even to God, the Beginning and End of all things."

That's what St. Thomas has to say about curiosity. It will come as a shock to many to learn that it is a sin, since intellectual curiosity is exalted by the liberalism which prevails in our "best" colleges. It is not a greed for knowledge, but a thirst for truth, which is virtuous. The man who has a thirst for truth is forever seeking to know first principles, to find God. He may be way off the beam at a given moment, taken in by Freud or Yogi, but if he maintains his search and his good will, he will find the ultimate truth. (Here we cannot help but remark on the difference between a pagan searching for truth and seeing, for instance, the glimmer of truth in Freud, and the Catholic who admires Freud in disregard of the fullness of truth which he has and which he has neglected to explore. The former comes through almost untarnished, the latter is a candidate for spiritual

blindness.) The curious man, on the other hand, sticks to second, third, tenth and trivial things. He would do well on *Information Please*, or as a Professor of Sociology at Hunter College, or compiling another volume of "strange facts."

Most Americans don't know (or seem to care) if God exists; which, if any, is the Church Christ founded; what the purpose of life is; and what will happen to them after they die. What they *must* know is whether the Brooklyn Dodgers won, if U. S. Steel is off $\frac{1}{2}$, the weather report, a five-letter word meaning "to steal," and so on. "Ought we to have a Third Party in the United States?" Town Hall asks. But Town Hall has not committed itself for or against the existence of the Deity, or even ventured to investigate the morality of contraception. And the truth of the matter is that if Town Hall concerned itself with anything really important the radio would frown upon it. Because we Americans originally disagreed about fundamentals, we have come to assume that there is no truth about them.

This mental busyness, this superficial accumulation of facts, this "don't miss anything" attitude which causes Americans to break out in a rash of newspapers and digests, deserves to be punished by spiritual blindness. God is trying to show us, through circumstances, how dangerous our condition is. We are like men who won't look up from the latest work on "How to Make Hatchets" long enough to see the axe descending on our own heads. What wonder then that God takes light away, so that if we should chance to look up, we would only see the unusual contour of the axe handle, or want to measure the wind's resistance to its descent.

Pride

The chief condition of learning truth is humility, a certain docility to light from above, a certain mistrust of one's own powers of discernment. But we Americans have even lost the correct meaning of the word humility, and we have striven to set ourselves up as gods. We have self-confidence, self-assurance. We are self-made. All these are reflections of the fact that we no longer look to God but to ourselves. Now the hero of American academic circles is the agnostic, the skeptic, the liberal philosopher. He is the man of tolerance, who regards only one thing with horror, and that is dogmatism. The American liberal exactly fits Earnest Hello's description of The Mediocre Man ". . . who considers every affirmation insolent, because every affirmation excludes the contradictory proposition." These people are usually gentle by nature, and therefore escape the censure which they richly deserve. We have glorified them, whereas in truth they have done incalculable harm to souls.

Academic pride has given rise to the factory system of teacher-training, to the Ph.D. assembly lines, to the accreditation system and the mania for experts and footnotes in America. Everybody is talking at once, and nobody has truth. You can ask anybody from the ten-cent store clerk to the president of the university this simple question: "What is the purpose of life?" and not get an answer, unless someone has chanced to read it in a catechism. The situation is at once ludicrous and tragic.

Intellectual pride does not seem to have affected the ordinary man directly, but only to characterize his blind university guides. He is more likely to have curiosity. Anyhow, between the two vices, there is widespread spiritual blindness, and almost universal materialism. Why aren't there more miracles around? Where are the saints? You might find them in the byways, but don't look for them in the highways. The American Way of Life does not conduce to their production.

Can Americans Become Contemplative?

"We need a St. Francis of Assisi in America," one frequently hears. Indeed we do. What a delight it would be to have a great barefoot saint helping us to extricate ourselves from the chains of materialism which bind us to the consideration of earthly things.

But we also need a St. Dominic. We need someone who dares shout what we scarcely dare whisper, that everywhere youths are going to college and being graduated as bewildered fools who do not even know the purpose of life. We need someone to give us courage to disregard the latest expert in deference to The First Expert. Then we shall take to our knees and light will be given to us.

PETER MICHAELS.



"But David, aren't you being a little naive?"

A Catholic Culture for America

The U.S.A. is a civilized country rather than a cultured one. Culture is organic, personal; civilization is impersonal, inanimate, brittle. If the Church is to be something more in the U.S.A. than simply another denomination then it must create a Catholic culture. It must be a culture with roots in the soil, and with a vital stake in every public movement.

The most startling observation to a foreigner is the lack of any organized secular Catholic life. The Church here is well-organized ecclesiastically, huge numbers attend Mass faithfully, her educational and charitable institutions are richly endowed, there is a fruitful spirituality and an intelligent and ardent clergy. The proportion of Catholics in the U.S.A. is one in six, yet their influence on American life is slight. Except in New Mexico and some rural sections of the mid-West there is no evidence of a Catholic culture. The American Catholic is indistinguishable from his fellow Americans—except by refusing to eat meat on Friday.

Catholics are a minority, it is true. Yet the Protestant majority is sub-divided into over a hundred sects, and one-half the population claims no church affiliation whatever. No longer is the timidity of an embattled minority defensible. Catholics can only meet the challenge of the neo-pagan world by a united front battling in the world, not from behind church walls. It is imperative that Catholics come out of the ghetto.

To accomplish the formation of a Catholic culture in the U.S.A. three tasks must be accomplished: the creation of a Catholic aristocracy, the recognition of the traditional Catholic culture in the rural areas, and the conquest of the key intellectual positions. If the first task disturbs those Americans who have succumbed to the modern idea that a democracy must necessarily be a government where all are equal and whose people live in a land of no distinctions; all alike slaves to the mass mind, cogs in the wheel of industry, then we will remind them that the Founding Fathers of the republic intended that there should be representative government by a competent, responsible class of men. The Founding Fathers created a republic on these shores and not a democracy. In the *Federalist*, Madison defines these two forms of government as follows: “. . . in a democracy, the people exercise the government in person; in a republic they administer it by their representatives.” It was the latter that the writers of the Constitution had in mind.

The Aristocracy

It is an American paradox that in a land where there is continual talk of democracy there is also a desperate attempt to rid itself of the results of democracy. The society pages of the daily newspapers contain more information about the goings-on of the socially acceptable than do the newspapers of monarchies. All the evidence is of a people trying not to be "democratic." Witness the color distinctions, the emphasis laid on the importance of a college degree, the snobbery of fraternities and sororities, the hints at Norman descent and Mayflower ancestors, the whispering campaign against Jews, the restricted neighborhoods. Social ambition is the most important factor in American life and the greatest incentive to the American ego.

So the notion of a native aristocracy is not too far-fetched. The old families in the country are not as powerful as formerly, but are still vital and a factor to be reckoned with. They are holding their own against the onslaught of the technicians, advertising men and corporation executives who seem destined to be the architects of the future civilization.* There are men today who are the worthy descendants of Washington and Jefferson, who prefer to live on their land in modest comfort, who are conscious of their responsibilities and who respect the great American spiritual and intellectual inheritance. This element in the population possesses all the original strength and elan. They might disappear from the public view for a generation or two, only to reappear on the scene again with all the vitality and purpose of their forefathers. Their influence is considerable even now in some sections; in New England, the border states of the South and on the Pacific Coast.

None the less tenacious is the Catholic aristocracy of the Maryland river valleys, of the Kentucky blue-grass region, the descendants of distinguished Spanish families in New Mexico and the prolific and wonderful progeny of the Spanish-Irish landowners in California. It is to these people that Catholics should look for a way of life that makes no compromise with materialism.

The People

To help the elite get into Heaven there must be a Catholic populace. Millions of Catholic immigrants brought to this country as their most cherished possession—their Faith. In their mental baggage they brought legends and customs, festivals and Saints' days, ancient ballads and dances. They brought their arts and skills and transplanted intact their family and community life in the traditional Catholic pattern.

* For a description of this civilization, read Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*.

The Church has been the bridge between Europe and America. The newest Catholic refugee just off the boat has his Faith in common with the descendant of a Chavez in New Mexico or a Carroll in Maryland.

The Faith also binds together the diverse elements of this most unhomogeneous land. It is the connecting link between the French-Canadian mill worker of New Hampshire and the Ukrainian wheat farmer of North Dakota; the Irish saloonkeeper in Boston and the Basque sheep-herder in Idaho; the Portuguese fisherman in Gloucester, the Czech baker in Cedar Rapids, the German brewer in Milwaukee, the Negro janitor in Harlem, the Italian florist in San Francisco, the Polish assembly man in Detroit, the Magyar coal miner in Pennsylvania, the Slovak steel worker in Cleveland, the Lithuanian refinery worker in Chicago, the Syrian rug weaver in Brooklyn, the Pueblo Indian craftsman in Arizona. The culture of America is largely a transplanted one, and the most cultured people in the U.S.A. are those of the minority groups who have not abandoned their traditions.

To observe these transplanted cultures at their best we must go to the rural districts. Only when he has settled on the land has the immigrant retained his traditional manner of living. In the cities he is waging a losing battle. What chance is there in a crowded tenement on a sooty, noisy street in the midst of the least desirable examples of American civilization, for the flourishing of a culture born of an agrarian way of life? The immigrant is frustrated in his attempts to teach his children the homely virtues of the old homeland. He is bewildered by the sight of his children who before his eyes are becoming corrupted by movies, dance halls and the brutal comradeship of the city streets. The children don't know what is happening to them, they only try to conform as one does in a "democracy." The Americanization process is at work, the de-personalization of a human being has begun.

The reaction to such demoralizing processes has set in already. Americans and American institutions do not look favorably upon forced Americanization. They have begun to realize after two decades of bungling and confusion that too rapid Americanization is detrimental to sound development. The younger generations, if cut away suddenly from the traditions of their original stocks do not prove stable elements in the make-up of American society. Juvenile crime primarily finds its victims among those young people whom over-zealous Americanization has deprived of the life-value of nationality backgrounds, without being able to substitute for these sound thinking. Accordingly responsible civic leaders prefer to make haste slowly in this field.

Traditional mores come out second-best in the cities. In the rural areas, however, the old ways have been preserved in more or less purity.

The Czech, German, Polish and Belgian farmers of the mid-West, the Italian, Portuguese and Dalmatian fishermen along the coasts are representatives of a traditional Catholic culture. To find Catholic culture in the U.S.A. at its best you must go among the Mexican settlements in New Mexico and western Texas; to the isolated hamlets of Cajun trappers deep in the bayous of Louisiana; to the rich farm lands of central Iowa, where German and Irish families have kept close to the land for three generations; to the delightful Belgian villages amid the cherry orchards of Door County, Wisconsin; among the Ukrainian farmers of North Dakota, whose towns might have been carried over bodily from the steppes; and to Bardstown, Kentucky, where English Catholics settled in the closing years of the Revolution and to its gracious and dignified Cathedral, one of Catholic America's historic shrines; and from Bardstown, along the road north to Louisville, by the venerable Trappist abbey, and through towns with the holy names of Nazareth, Bethlehem, Gethsemane.

The Catholic rural movement is of great importance to the U.S.A. The era of great industrial megalopolitan centers is nearing an end. The trend towards decentralization already has set in. The urban population, predominantly Catholic now, has great difficulty competing with the high birth rate of the Protestant rural districts. The rural areas need Catholic families and the "back to the land" movement needs to be free from the sentimentality that is such a detriment to it. The rural life program needs the vitality that comes from stimulating activities such as cooperatives, agricultural colleges, and folk high schools.

The Intellectuals

The third task, a responsible intellectual class, is more difficult of accomplishment. We immediately turn to the universities for the human material. But the prospect is sad. The Catholic colleges have not met the challenge of the times. They seem to turn out only insurance agents, automobile salesmen and copy writers. The skeptical attitude of the Church toward mass movements is not discussed in the schools and Catholic students are often not aware of the Church's negative attitude toward the spirit of the times. No attempt is made to destroy the great god Success. Catholic college graduates are no less vulnerable to the effect of the battle to "keep up with the Joneses," than are the graduates of the secular universities. They become civilized at college and ignore or scorn the culture of their fathers.

One might feel some hope in the young intellectuals that foregather in the larger cities, if they didn't become immured in their ivory towers, spending their days (or more often their nights) in endless discussions, stimulating enough to be sure, but influencing no one but their own kind. Catholic intellectual circles are a congerie of groups,

each claiming an "apostolate," each one feverish with activity, and each ignoring the other. The Faith that has unified the contrasting minority groups across the land has failed to unite these unregenerate individualists. Working in their own milieu, they have failed to recognize the broader view of an American apostolate. All the "apostolates," whether to the Negro, the poor, the press, the worker, the youth have one goal, the sanctification of society and of one's own soul, yet few of the zealots understand it in its full significance. These eager and intelligent young ones should be the leaders back to culture, but until they work together in the local scene, it will be impossible for them to work on a national scale.

The third class should recruit its members from the other two classes. It should be as free of class and racial bias as the clergy. As a peasant's son can be pope, and a prince of the royal blood may be content to be an humble lay brother, so the Catholic intelligentsia should welcome equally the immigrant and his children as well as the old stock Catholic of English-Irish-Spanish-French background. It is only in this way that the tremendous task can be accomplished. It is to the intellectual elite that we should look for the formation of a Catholic theater of the highest standards; based on what is best in Broadway, but not neglecting the provinces; for a Catholic motion picture company, a Catholic lecture forum. It is from this third class that should come a Catholic literature, a crying need. There are Catholic writers in the U.S.A., or would it be more accurate to call them writers who are Catholic? They have been frustrated in their efforts by the lack of a Catholic reading public, by the absence of an enlightened publishing business and an intellectually dynamic press. But must Catholic writers produce only for the negligible Catholic market? Willa Cather has shown what can be done with a fine piece of writing on a Catholic theme. Her *Death Comes For the Archbishop* is the finest American Catholic novel to date.

This, then, is the task for the Catholics of the U.S.A. The country had Christian beginnings and there has always been a ready store of idealism to supply successive generations. This is doomed to dry up under the impact of technological civilization unless great effort is made to bolster the spiritual life of the U.S.A. Catholics must understand their Faith, but equally important they must understand their Faith in relation to the world around them. If Catholic culture is to be taken from the ghetto to be reconstructed in the full glare of public life, then it must be not only Catholic, but American.

Let us come out of the ghetto before we have to take to the catacombs.

LEONARD AUSTIN.



***THERE WILL BE NO JEW AND NO
GENTILE, NO COLORED AND NO WHITE~***



**BUT ALL ONE IN
HART, SCHAFFNER & MARX.**

Some Fell Among Thorns

And he spoke to them many things in parables, saying: Behold the sower went forth to sow. . . . And others fell among thorns: and the thorns grew up and choked them. . . . And he that received the seed among thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless.

—MATTHEW xiii, 3-22.

Let us call this city Lakeport, because that is not its name, and because it is a port on the Great Lakes. While this is one city, it represents scores of other cities throughout the country, cities that are in the same spiritual state, where the seed of the Faith has been sown, and where the thorns are growing up and choking the seed.

Lakeport is spiritually a dead city, in common with its many counterparts in these United States, where the love of riches and the comforts of the American Way of Life choke the spirituality of the people. There is nothing like luxurious living to destroy the seed of sacrifice and the spirit of subservience to the Will of God.

Lakeport differs little from many another city. It has more gas stations than churches, more motion picture theaters than hospitals, more bartenders than teachers, and more mechanics than men of God. It has few wealthy people. The population is comprised of wage earners, ranging in hierarchy from superintendents (and managers) down to day laborers. Labor unions are strong and influential, on the American Federation of Labor pattern, and Catholics play prominent parts in them—more important parts than they play in Catholic activities. It is largely a city of small home owners, or those hopeful of owning their homes. Communism has never been strong, except during the deep depression, and now it is not a problem of importance.

About two-thirds of Lakeport is non-Catholic; about half of these nominally Protestant. There is a progressive weakening of Protestantism. Materialism is the greatest factor in this loss of membership; the trend is toward religious indifferentism, where it matters not whether the church is Methodist or Baptist or Presbyterian. Protestants attend the church nearest their home, and church-going is largely a matter of convenience.

Attempts are made to revive this flagging interest by evangelical crowd-rousers that attract a small core of faithful attendants, but the majority come for a while, and then drift away. The young people are dropping away from the churches. They go to Sunday School when they are small, but since their parents stay away from church few of the children continue when they are older.

Protestantism has little residual vitality. Then what of Catholicism?

The Church on the Outside

A count would show a large proportion of the Catholic population as regular weekly communicants. The churches are filled to overflowing, with long lines of the Faithful awaiting their turn at the Communion rail. Special services during Lent and other times are well attended. The infrequent missions have always had a fine attendance, and generally there could be little complaint regarding church attendance and Communions.

The Catholic parish and city organizations are strong. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine has a large and apparently satisfactory organization. Programs are scheduled for the various study clubs and groups in the Confraternity, and these schedules are carefully followed by most of the parish groups.

The Knights of Columbus boast a large and successful Council. It attains the Century Club regularly, which means that it adds one hundred or more members each year. Its tastefully furnished club-rooms are often used as a center for Catholic activities and for meetings by other Catholic organizations. Many consider this the best K. of C. Council in the state.

There are Holy Name Societies in almost every parish, with varying degrees of activity. Most of them hold monthly Communion breakfasts after the Holy Name Mass, when the men of the society discuss problems and listen to speakers.

The Catholic Daughters of America are active, with regular meetings, donations to worthy Catholic causes, such as providing Catholic books for the public library, helping the nuns in catechizing during the summer months and holding occasional retreats.

All the parishes have parent-teacher associations, and some Christian Mothers associations, with regular meetings, talks by various priests and prominent laymen.

There are one-day retreats for the men every year and often retreats for the women. Lately some parishes have experimented with days of recollection.

That is the surface. On the surface it seems as though there is a vigorous Catholic life, especially when you add that such Catholic figures as Dorothy Day, Catherine de Hueck Doherty, the Grail Leaders, Vincent McAloon, Therese Mueller, and other have spoken at Lakeport during the past several years. But the surface is deceiving.

Is there any real vitality to all this surface activity—the many Communions, the large memberships in these Catholic organizations? What are the results? Is the real life that exists in the Sacraments taking hold of the Catholic people, turning them into Catholic apostles?

Let's look at conversions. There are few other than those connected with marriages to Catholics. This is not to belittle these, but the scarcity of others indicates that Catholics are not overwhelming their fellow citizens with their Catholicity.

The spiritual outcome of mixed marriages is another measuring rod. There are many such marriages which frequently end as indifferent marriages—even among Catholic school graduates. Some mixed marriages may be expected because there is no Catholic college nearby, and Catholic boys and girls must go to a secular college if they want to attend one convenient to home. But it does question the depth of Catholic beliefs, and even training, when week after week marriages take place in Catholic rectories.

Take a typical instance: The girl is a good Catholic fundamentally, devout, educated in Catholic schools. But she is compromising. All her husband's relatives and friends are non-Catholic and she doesn't want to offend them. She goes to Communion less and less often, although periodically berating herself for her lack of regularity in attending the Sacraments. As a result of this sterile compromise, her Catholicity is lifeless in all but superficial aspects.

Vocations are another test. They have been few, very few for many years, and as a result the city and the diocese are impoverished of priests. The clergy are overworked, often trying to do two men's work, and getting but little help from the laity, who should play such an important role in the church's growth.

Civic Corruption

Another test of the vitality of Lakeport is the state of civic virtue and professional ethics. In both these fields, the trend is basically away from moral virtue.

First, the community as a whole has a spotted past. For years it had a wide open "red light" district, and this was only closed within the last ten years, and not for any religious or moral motives. In the past gambling openly flourished, with slot machines, card games, and elaborate gambling houses. All those were against the laws of city and state, but the laws were not enforced. To my knowledge, there has been no serious protest, serious enough to gain appreciable support, against any of these vicious practices from anyone within the city—whether it be priest, minister, newspaper, public official, or otherwise.

These evidences of civic corruption have been linked with graft and bribery on the one hand and a deplorable indifferentism on the part of the public on the other. This naturally had a destructive effect on the life of the community, lowering its moral tone and exposing its members to temptations of all kinds. Especially vicious has been its effect on the youth, thus subjected to concupiscence of the eyes, ears

and body. Perhaps such things as these account for the venereal disease clinic held each week.

Another indication might be public activities. Generally speaking they are not religious, they are not "cultural" in any sense of the word, but the ordinary escapist pleasures of the world, and worldly in almost every aspect.

Lakeport has a tavern or bar for about every four hundred men, women and children of the city—a fair indication of the amount of drinking. Some taverns have dance floors, which are the only places youth have to dance, with the exception of occasional school dances. Sometimes a fraternal organization will sponsor a dance for the children of its members.

Generally, then, Lakeport is a community of too much drinking, too little concern for the effects on their children of civic corruption, graft and immorality. Practically all of the corruption, graft and immorality is now past history—though only within the past ten years—but the effects do linger on, for the purge was not a moral one.

Solution By Dissolution

The divorce rate is high, about three divorces to every five marriages. There are no figures on the percentage of Catholics involved, but they are said to be low. A contributing cause of this high divorce rate is the ease of securing divorces. When divorces are not contested, there is little difficulty beyond the legal waiting time—and most are not contested. Many attorneys have little hesitation in recommending a divorce. Some consider it the practical solution for everything from a petty squabble to more or less serious drinking. To their legalistic minds, marriage is merely another contract, to be dissolved with the proper whereas and be-it-resolved clauses.

There are many Catholic lawyers and judges. Most of them have the political wit of the Irish, a help to survival in a predominantly non-Catholic city. Perhaps this has made them more cautious, but their materialism is strong.

There are some very fine doctors, and some very poor ones. One doctor, for instance, specializes in abortions, but because of "medical ethics" other doctors, including high-minded Catholics, do nothing to attempt to remedy the situation.

The subject of abortion leads to a discussion of birth control, natural or unnatural. Another indication of the spiritual condition of Lakeport is its lack of fruitfulness in marriage.

Parents of large families—and by large most mean four or five children—are considered queer, and such mothers are greeted with comments ranging from "Did you get caught again, honey?" to stories of what others had done through doctors or patent medicines or other

means to murder unborn children. The frankness with which birth control is discussed, even among Catholic women, is disgusting.

It is not unusual for families to have only two children—one for the father and one for the mother, as they so calmly express their desires. And there are the usual number of career women, who feel that the world expects more of them than the mere raising of children. Some find to their great sorrow that they cannot trifle with God, and are unable to have children when they feel they can "afford" them.

Others are a bit more fortunate, such as one mother who had one child, apparently with some regret since it interfered with her career. After some six or seven years, she heeded the child's plea for a brother or sister, and brought another into the world. But she is still more devoted to her job than to her family. She hires a girl to take care of the two children, and the mother sees them an hour or two daily, and on week-ends. And this, like other cases, is not one where the mother must work but where she wants a career of her own outside her home to inflate her vanity, or to add luxuries to an already sufficient income.

The Church From the Inside

But let's see if there really is any vitality in the Catholic organizations which superficially seem so successful. And since it is the largest and the most successful, let's take first the Knights of Columbus.

They set the pace for Catholic lay activity. They recognize their prominent place, and meetings frequently resound with the phrase, "the strong right arm of the Church." In Lakeport, the Knights of Columbus are the largest Catholic organization. They are the most active, and they should have the urge to do big things. As Father Gillis remarked at the Catholic Press Association convention this year, "The Knights of Columbus used to say years ago when they were 600,000, that they must do big things or perish, perish of dry rot—or of rot not so dry." The last phrase apparently struck home to his audience, as the ripple of appreciative laughter demonstrated.

The Knights of Columbus in Lakeport draw into their organization the men most likely to work for catholic action. And through these members, the Catholic women of the city are likewise involved in K. of C. activities.

Financially, their position is a most enviable one from a worldly viewpoint. They have probably \$25,000 in their treasury. Unfortunately, the possession of this money has hardened the determination of the trustees to resist any attacks against it. At one time a resolution was introduced to spend \$25 of it in providing Scout awards. Half a meeting was taken to discuss pro and con this heavy expenditure, and finally after much protest the expenditure of \$25 was approved, a prime example of the power of riches to destroy perspective, charity, and even common sense.

Unfortunately, the whole tone of the K. of C. activities is social. Their clubrooms are in the same style as the other fraternal organizations of the city, the Elks, the Eagles, and so forth. The pattern is the same, even to the bar at which beer and hard liquor are sold. The rule of the Knights of Columbus forbidding membership to anyone in the retail liquor business does not keep the Council itself out of that business. Also the fact that such a bar is definitely an occasion of sin for many of its members is not allowed to interfere with the profits thereof.

The Knights of Columbus followed other fraternal organizations in installing slot machines at a time when they were illegal, complacent authorities suffering it. The theory was that their members would play the machines anyway, and might as well do it in good surroundings. At the time they pointed with justifiable pride to the fact that their machines were set on a minimum percentage—that is, the machines were adjusted so that the house would take only a small proportion of the money played. Thus, it would take you that much longer to lose all your money. The slot machines were later removed—not through the triumph of civic virtue, nor religious scruples, nor an indignant public. A new state law was passed, with sharp teeth, and reluctantly, but with hopes for the future, the slot machines were stored away.

All this has produced a social type of catholic action in the minds of the Council members. Their catholic action consists of a Catholic bowling league in the winter, Catholic dances on Saturday nights, and a Catholic picnic during the summer.

This peculiar Catholic social sense penetrates the minds of all the members. A newly elected Grand Knight once confided that he was determined to effect some reforms, the main one being to close the bar before midnight on Saturday evenings. He realized, of course, that this could not be done immediately, but hoped to accomplish it by the end of his term of office.

Another worthy enterprise was the setting of the fifth Sunday of the month as Communion Sunday for the Council.

In justice, it must be admitted that it is expected that the Knights will go to Communion with other men of their Holy Name Societies. But this plethora of social activity vitiates their desire for any other Catholic work. As a result, the Holy Name Societies are anemic, and their activities, small as they are, are subordinate to the social activities of the Council.

The Knights and the Holy Name men do sponsor a one-day retreat, or day of recollection for the men each year. They do get a good representation. Of course, they do not observe silence; there is a convention atmosphere about the intermissions. And they are careful

not to schedule the retreat when it would interfere with deer hunting or duck shooting or football games, or any other really important activities. And they choose the retreat master with care. He must not be too demanding, and should be entertaining, and sociable. A painless retreat is wanted. Perhaps it really is needed, because if you drop a man over his head in spiritual waters he may drown. But after six or seven years a one-day retreat can stand intensification.

The women do a bit better with retreats, though they do not have one every year. They have better retreat masters; rather, their retreats are more spiritual, and at one time they had three-day retreats. But that was years ago.

There is no retreat house in the diocese, of which this is the largest city. Some years ago, at the first men's retreat, the Bishop expressed the hope that a retreat house might come out of this new activity. That is as far as it has gone.

There are many other Catholic organizations in the city. The Legion of Mary, which is one of the new excellent apostolic organizations, consists of a few elderly women, whose hearts are filled with charity, but whose activities are extremely limited.

The Catholic Daughters of America include the best Catholic women of the city. Some of their members do excellent work in helping the Sisters in catechizing children in the rural areas, but their influence is not felt beyond that.

The parent-teacher associations are much as they are elsewhere—as are the Foresters and Christian Mothers. Recently a St. Vincent de Paul Society conference was organized, and its influence is spreading. It is too early to tell how important it may become, although the beginnings are good.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is well organized and has many members. Personally I am disappointed with their accomplishments and feel that it falls far short of its possibilities; others feel otherwise.

Generally, however, Catholic activities lack spiritual fire, while Catholic Action is conspicuous by its absence. Oh, efforts have been made, and speakers have come and gone, and the seed has been planted, perhaps sprouted a bit, but then was smothered by the materialism of the people.

There have been various radio programs, Catholic quiz programs, Catholic news broadcasts, Catholic plays and dramas, and talks and interviews. There have been Catholic newspaper columns and publicity of Catholic events, Field Masses filling a municipal stadium, and city-wide prayers for peace. And the people have reacted to all of these, for a time; and have been interested and enthusiastic, for a time.

There have been various speakers brought by the Sisters in the

schools. They brought Dorothy Day to talk ("Why is she so shabby?" they asked) and the Baroness de Hueck ("Why does she use that atrocious slang—and she a Baroness!") and the Grail Leaders ("quaint!") and Vincent McAloon and many others. And they came, and they went, and the ripple caused by their coming soon passed away, and it was as though they had not been there.

And he that received the seed among thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless.

And that is the main reason for the fruitlessness of all the seeds planted in Lakeport. It is not hopeless; nothing is, so long as the Gospel is preached. But if the Faith is to take deep root among these people, if the seed is to grow, efforts must be strong enough to overcome the thorns.

And the thorns? This is an ordinary middle-class city, no different except in detail from hundreds of others. It is dedicated to the Good Things in life, as exemplified by the American Way of Life and the advertisements in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Here a man wants a new car every year, two children—one for his wife and one for himself; a cottage on the lake, and beer in the refrigerator. The best thing about his job is his pay check and quitting time, when he can drop over to the club for a small one and chat with the boys, and go out for a game of golf, or go fishing.

That is Lakeport—a city of mediocrity, basking in its lukewarmness, unconvinced of the penalty Jesus Christ forecast for the lukewarm.

FLOYD ANDERSON



"But Pope Leo, aren't you being a little naive?"

Advertising and the American Woman

When considering the nature of true womanhood, Catholics have two very wonderful sources in the revealed word of God. The Book of Proverbs sings most beautifully and most realistically of the Valiant Woman—in whose heart her husband trusted, by whose charity and industry, by whose wisdom and prudence, the domestic kingdom flourished prosperously and well in the fear and love of God. St. Luke's joyous account, too, of Mary's visit to Elizabeth is the most exalted yet sweetly simple lesson in the holiness of Christian women whose delight is in their God and in the greatness of their motherhood.

But the modern woman, that Great American Institution, no longer reads the Scriptures—a factor which would not be so detrimental to her spiritual life and to the spiritual life of her family if, then, she read nothing at all. The American woman is, however, a notoriously voracious reader, as a glance at the popular magazine stand or a rush-hour subway ride will indicate. As such she is a much too susceptible victim of another Great American Institution—Advertising—which serves in itself as an inspired text of secularism and a complete education in materialism.

Most advertising is aimed specifically for the American woman and reaches directly at her through the media of her favorite magazines, which have become as indispensable to her as the breviary to the priest.

Since the function of the advertiser is to produce results in the increased sale of goods, his method, generally, is to create a *desire* for goods. Obviously, the stimulated desire must be greater than the natural interest of the woman, who usually controls the family wealth, in providing cautiously and wisely for the needs of her household. That is to say, it must make the purchase of some item appear to the woman as a necessity whether it is or not. Under normal conditions of living, the supply is met only when the demand is a true demand. This simplicity of economics, while intrinsically sane and prudent, is unsatisfactory to the American system of mass production. Industry looks to the advertiser for the remedy.

That the advertiser counts for his success on the use to which he can put the American woman is, as has been mentioned, due to the fact that she does, either as a mother of a family or as an independent wage earner, determine on what the money is to be spent and how much will be spent. Furthermore, it is a relatively easy matter to influence her directly. Unlike men, who read less and more intelligently, she devotes much time, interest and respect to the so-called women's magazines, which constantly formulate her mind and attitudes in keeping with their own worldly standards.

According to the advertisers, there are two types of magazines: those read by the "masses" and those read by the "classes." The distinction made is based on purchasing power. *The Ladies Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Redbook*, etc., magazines of enormous circulation belong to the "masses"—the middle income groups whose needs and whose ambitions are moderate. *Vogue*, *Mademoiselle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, etc., are definitely of the "class" satisfying the demands of the professional woman, and the woman of wealth. Nevertheless, recognize the fact that the average American Woman is too well acquainted with all the popular periodicals.

Through observation of the first type magazine and its advertisements certain facts become evident. Whether selling toothpaste, a laxative, rugs, stockings, cold cream, evaporated milk, or mattresses, the technique of the advertiser is *not* at all to supply his readers with reasonably accurate information concerning his product—in fact, the method to his madness is to do everything *but* tell the truth. "Everything" usually is reduced to an appeal made to very human, but not always ennobling, emotions—pride, either personal or social, to the desire for masculine attention, for beautiful things or just for possessions. For example, in the *Ladies' Home Journal* for May there were five advertisements for hand lotion representing five different hand lotion manufacturers. The various copy read: (1) "Now! Keep your *hands* as kissable as your lips. It's new, new, NEW!" (Woodbury's); (2) "'I'll find you,' he said, 'wherever you go. I'll always know those soft hands.' Chances are such memorably soft hands are Jergens cared for . . . Hollywood stars use Jergens Lotion, New York Models use Jergens Lotion . . . and big preferences for Jergens among other groups of charming women"; (3) He's helpless in your hands with the *New Hinds!*"; (4) ". . . symbol of noble birth—The Fair and Fragile Hand . . . More Hands use Pacquins than any other hand cream in the world;" (5) "Beauty experts say: Do this . . . for Hands that invite Romance. . ." (Sofskin). With the added enticement of suggestive photographs or drawings and despite the farcical exaggeration of pretended results, a woman, through constant exposure to such nonsense, is approached successfully through her wish for physical attractiveness, her interest in novelty, in her desire to be sought after by men, in her submissiveness to authority (the beauty expert), in her measurement of success-in-life-by the movie star, and the model.

However, a magazine read, chiefly, by the housewife, aims further in the encouragement of an old American custom: "Keeping-up-with the Joneses," where everything from pressure cookers, automobiles, and silverware to furniture must be a matter of pride as well as of

beauty and utility. Viewed in its entirety, the exploitation of woman's natural concern for the welfare of her home, through advertising, means the continuation of a false ideal: the sacrosanct American way of life, which is materialistic, ambitious, self-seeking, looking for fulfillment in luxury and leisure and in material and social success.

More ruthless, yet more subtle, is the "class" magazine, particularly *Vogue*, whose pages are dedicated to the task of educating the American woman to its own standards of paganism. It does some curious and rather terrifying things in accomplishing its purpose. At least three-quarters of its content is advertisement. It is a highly specializing magazine; its subjects: women and fashion. Logically, but somehow, strangely, husbands, children and families are simply not considered. *Woman* comes into her own, self-existing in a new world of her own making. Its readers are, of course, career women, whose position in Big Business, demands the sleek sophistication, the poised smartness of a *Vogue* Model and the women of wealth who must keep up the appearance of wealth. In accordance with the sort of culture it affects, *Vogue's* advertisements represent tremendous outputs of genuine artistry and talent, the chief end of which is, again, the exploitation of the beauty and natural desires of women. If advertising is the art of the lie, it is *Vogue* which demonstrates so well that it is an art. The *Vogue* woman is the smart woman—successful, beautiful, wanted, admired, adored. But she is this too—selfish, hard, superficial, immodest, and masculine. She is not a mother, she is scarcely a wife—sufficient unto herself, she is not even a woman.

Who shall find a Valiant Woman?

Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.

* * *

Strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle. Her children rose up and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her works praise her in the gates.

How remote our *Vogue* woman is from being a Valiant woman! And how far more remote from possessing the purity and womanliness of Mary who could worship God in this manner:

My soul doth magnify the Lord

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;

Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid;

for behold, henceforth, all generations shall

call me blessed: . . .

Advertising remains one of the most serious barriers to the conversion of the American woman to the Christian life, for she is subject to its overwhelming presence. Setting up luxury and security as a goal for pursuit, advertising is publicity agent for materialism and a determining factor in the constant formation of women in a way of life, while it may be American, is not Christian, and is certainly pagan.

Feast of St. Paschal Baylon,
DOLORES BRIEN



"But Mother Cabrini, aren't you being a little naive?"

Hints for Converting America

The confirmed Catholic in these United States as he sets about the task of restoring all things in Christ, must approach each problem fully aware of this specific duty that is his alone. The expert, whether in theology or economics, cannot solve *his* problems for *him*. Beyond the factor of a specific duty lies the greater and more glorious factor of specific grace. With a humility beyond belief were it not for Divine testimony to its existence, the Holy Ghost waits upon our instrumentality. God has chosen to act through us. If we do not manifest Christ, each of us in his own specific and peculiar fashion, then it follows that our associates, who are pagan, cannot know Him. It is through us that God is seen, or not seen; it is dependent upon us.

The conversion of America will wait until this lesson is learned. There is no substitute for personal responsibility. When the moment comes for John Smith, heir to Heaven to speak, the universe and the angels hold their tongues, and wait. His neighbor over the back fence may have asked the question, "Do you think that life has any meaning?" Through John's mind flow many thoughts, and his emotions are mixed. He may recall a sentimental piece of goo spoken by a dilettante which had been reprinted in the Sunday supplement under the picture of a herd of sheep. The temptation is strong to quote these slick and silly phrases as a substitute for an embarrassing testimony of faith. He may shift the conversation to baseball or gladioli. The angels wait. John takes a deep breath. His words may be slow and uncertain but in the colloquial speech of his times he tells his neighbor of the promises of Christ, just as he himself knows them and understands them. In that simple and homely fashion Christ is made manifest to the world. The entire power of the Church, the Sacramental system, the hierarchy, and indeed, the Passion and Death of Christ, are marshalled behind the faltering words of John Smith at the moment when he makes his declaration of faith. In his quiet monosyllables is imbedded the fish-hook of Peter the Apostle. For one awe-full moment John Smith speaks for God. If he had not spoken, there would have been a silence which no sound could ever fill.

An Organized Attack

A sense of personal responsibility increased by an active Faith will lead the lay apostle to spend many hours with the sages of the Church and learn from them the nature of the Faith and the temper of the times. He will see from experience as well as from the wisdom of the Popes that sporadic personal attacks can hardly serve to turn

the tide of materialism which itself is so powerfully organized. Consequently he will agitate among his fellow-Catholics until he can form a nucleus of like-minded people.

At this stage of the game, the will of the majority instead of the Will of God is liable to become prominent, for that is an old American custom. Counting noses is the weakest of methods for ascertaining truth, especially when the end is a spiritual one. When the majority has its way the danger increases that the very habits of thought which militate against the Faith will become part of the technique of the apostolate. The tools of the world are always clumsy in the hands of the Christian. If the apostolate chooses to use the weapons of the world, the battle will resemble a duel with marshmallows at fifty paces. It will be another children's crusade, just a boy on a man's errand. An error already strong in the apostolate which flows directly from the spirit of the times, is that of placing too much emphasis on natural means and natural ends. This is a formidable obstacle that deserves our attention.

The Spirit of the Thing

Suppose that two men who were neighbors went into their adjacent back yards and each began to dig a hole. Now, the intention of the first man was to erect a statue to Our Blessed Lady, and his excavation was to hold the base of the pedestal. The purpose of the other man was to dig a grave for his mother-in-law whom he was planning to strangle on her next visit. To all appearances both men were doing the same thing. Actually what they were doing was altogether different. It is conceivable that a charitable Christian might come down the road and, seeing the men at work, say to both of them, "The sun is warm. Why don't you rest and let me dig for a while." His offer being accepted, the good old soul proceeds unconsciously to give honor to Mary in one yard, and, in the next yard, to be a minor accessory to murder. The point I wish to make here is that cooperation in any work demands, if it is to bear good fruit, that the man be fully aware of the end and purpose of the endeavor.

If this counsel is not observed, the Catholic apostolate may find itself used as a mere tool in the hands of those who know what they are about. For instance, an apostolate for better unionism must operate within a secular framework, because we do not have Catholic labor unions, nor are they feasible in the United States. Consequently it will be but rarely that the Catholic unionist can give his whole-hearted, unqualified support to union policy because in its immediate ends or the means to attain those ends there will usually be an un-Christian, and therefore anti-Christian, ingredient.

and nudity, whether informally in the dormitory or officially at the elaborate physical examinations presided over by the hygiene department, was more or less taken for granted.

SUPERNATURAL meant phony psychic phenomena, like crystal gazing. We were strict naturalists. If there was a higher intelligence than ours in the universe, it was of the same sort as ours. But generally we credited what higher powers there might be with having lower intelligences than ours: blind force, or energy, or chance. So much for God. As for angels, it never crossed our minds that they might really exist, fallen or otherwise.

All the words which are more or less related to the supernatural went by the board with it. Sacrament, grace, mystical: they were words which we seldom heard and to which we attached no meaning. "God is Love" was written conspicuously over the choir of the chapel and was given as the designation of a special autumn Sunday. Still, the idea of the theological virtue of charity was certainly lacking to almost all students.

HUMILITY was no virtue to us, whether in practice (for the most part) or in theory. It suggested to us a sort of base grovelling, a lack of the ever desirable self-confidence. Instead of humility we used the word modesty to indicate a person who doesn't brag about his attainments. We would have thought St. Theresa of Lisieux was lacking in modesty for saying "I was made for great things." We had never heard that humility does not involve the denial of good qualities but the acknowledgment of them as from God.

SANCTITY was an unfamiliar word, and certainly not an ideal of character. Our ideal characters were strictly on the natural plane of greatness. We admired Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale and Walt Whitman, and we would have gone right along with those who say St. Teresa of Avila was a prize psychoneurotic. That is, we would have if we had ever heard of her.

Our ideals of conduct were on the natural level too. We thought it would be a wonderful thing to find a cure for cancer and to give money to reputable charities. We were scrupulously honest according to our conception of honesty. There was practically no cheating at college and theft was limited to an occasional kleptomaniac. Most of us came from families which wouldn't have dreamt of taking anything not theirs and would have been disgraced to accept relief if jobs could still be had scrubbing floors. Yet most of our fathers were responsibly involved in banking, corporations, railroads, insurance companies and Wall Street, places where (it is said) robbery on a large scale sometimes takes place. That curious clinging to what might be called "petty honesty" is still a conspicuous "virtue" of the graduates of our best colleges, especially those engaged in such businesses as publicity, radio and publishing. The Harvard graduate who assures us that X-AX is gentle and harmless, feels he preserves his integrity by freely admitting in the bosom of his closest friends that the stuff is probably poison.

Some of our natural ideals of conduct were far less attractive. We were coming around to the idea that no fair-minded wife would force her husband to continue living with her after he had lost his love (romantic lust) for her. We rather thought it would be unfeeling to bring children into a world not fully prepared (financially) to take care of them. There was even a growing admiration for the noble girl who secretly and silently has an abortion rather than force the man she loves to marry her for any other reason than pure romantic love (lust) at a time suited to his convenience.

Results

So after four years we were turned out into a world which had, on the whole, even worse ideas than we had. It was a world desperately in need of salvation, but we were in no position to save it.

What happened to most of my friends was that they spent the next several years adjusting themselves downward to a world they couldn't lift up.

What's the point of studying English literature in order to spend your life reading unbelievably bad manuscripts for a publishing house with quite other than literary ambitions?

Why master higher mathematics in order to measure the capricious ups and downs of the stock market?

Had we disciplined our minds in order to do what was called "advertising research" but was really counting by ones?

Why had we bothered so with our brains if we were going to end up exhibiting our physical charms as Powers models?

The only thing ruthless commercialism had in common with our academic past was the irrelevancy of God to both types of life.

It is no wonder that none of my collegemates I know, now leads a joyous, purposeful life. Some have married, some not. Some have made money, some not. One killed herself. Most have reached a working compromise (not very stable) with circumstances as they found them.

Only a few remain actively tormented by the contrast between the mediocrity and materialism to which the world invites them, and the hollow in their hearts which aches for God.

M. B. W.



At M.I.T. trigonometry
Is advanced by men of vision.
Original Sin and the pickle we're in,
Has been solved by nuclear fission.

BOOK REVIEWS

On Making a Good Confession

PARDON AND PEACE
By Alfred Wilson, C. P.
Sheed & Ward.
Price: \$2.50.

Here is a practical guide to the oft-times regarded as insuperable problem of giving an intelligent account of our sins. The impact of pagan principles on today's Christian is infinitely more subtle than in the days of

the pagan Roman Empire. The devil is the matinee idol of our times. Monsieur Verdoux playing fast and loose with morality and getting away with it! An unaccountable fluctuation in the price of a certain stock reveals a \$10,000 a year "man of distinction" has been playing fast and loose with the welfare of widows and orphans. A camera enthusiast atop the Empire State Building carefully adjusts his lenses to capture the suicide leap of a tortured soul with one leg up on the parapet a few feet away. The line at the Paramount starts forming at 7:00 A.M. in Times Square. The tabloid gives us this day our daily surfeit of violence. "One-fourth of the budget of New York State is spent in the care of mental cases," says the newspaper. "Peace and there is no peace."

Too often, the approach to Confession is to compile a large budget of sins without an appropriate list of resolutions to match. Small wonder that we become weighed down with the burden of sin and thereby prejudice our chances of achieving an intelligent purpose of amendment, and the peace of mind which flows from absolution. Behind this Jansenist fussing lurks a latent desire to be self-sufficient and a lack of confidence in the goodness of God.

One of the chief obstacles to our reception of the Sacrament of Penance in its fullness, according to Fr. Wilson, is the lack of spiritual reading in our lives. We spurn the wisdom of Sacred Scripture and the counsel of St. Ignatius, St. John of the Cross, and St. Teresa of Avila for the pontifications of ex-cab drivers turned human relations experts, or fortune-tellers, astrologers or erudite psychiatrists with little regard for common sense or morality.

This is a wonderful book for priests and lay people both. It is written in a familiar style, and is besides very entertaining. Fr. Wilson has furnished the faithful with a year's supply of funny stories.

Pardon and Peace is nothing if not comprehensive. It covers everything from the advantages of confession and what constitutes a sin, to confessional manners; along with lots of detail and sound advice about examining your conscience and getting rid of scruples. It is one of the most welcome Catholic books published in recent years. Please everyone buy a copy.

JOHN MURPHY

Spiritually We Are Semites

THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL
By John Friedman.
Sheed & Ward.
Price: \$2.00.

It's an interesting fact that the one problem most widespread and most commonplace today, is a problem that can only be explained on the highest level of penetrative thought. The enigma of the Jew is a religious mystery. He is everywhere, yet

nowhere is he at home. He is accused of the one thing of which he is least capable, a global political plot. He is criticized as capitalist and as communist, as mystic and materialist, as a culture-vulture and a boor. The nearer he achieves assimilation (as in Germany), the more marked is he for specific persecution. The more autonomous he remains (as in England), the less is he singled out as victim. His salvation lies in the place where he has been least likely to seek it, in that other branch of Israel, the Roman Catholic Church.

This book is a meaty nutshell-full of the Jewish historical mystery. It is a brief 122-page essay which scans the passage of the Jew from Abraham to Henri Bergson, all in the light of Divine Revelation. It logically subdivides this history into three epochs:

- a) The Egyptian Epoch
 - b) The Babylonian Epoch
 - c) The Universal Epoch
- These epochs in turn are divided into three phases common to each:
- a) First Phase—Sin
 - b) Second Phase—Punishment
 - c) Third Phase—Salvation

Today, Mr. Friedman insists, finds the Jew more than halfway through the third and last phase of the final epoch. The material aspect of the regained Promised Land is the current return of the Jew to Palestine. Political Zionism, however, because it places the Nation before God (the sin of the Jew), is a factor which militates against salvation. The spiritual aspect of the regained Promised Land is found in those souls converted from Judaism to Catholicism, of which Dr. Friedman is one. Retaining their identities as Jews, these men, as new apostles of Christ, are the nucleus of a redeemed Israel. Re-grafted upon the Vine of Christ, they constitute the monumental answer to the enigma of the Jew.

All of which should give the Catholic who embraces an untenable anti-semitism something to *think* about. When there is no Jew and no Gentile but all one in Christ, the anti-semite will be a lonely man indeed.

ED WILLOCK

Garments Rended

LEON BLOY
PILGRIM OF THE ABSOLUTE
Introduction by Jacques Maritain.
Selections by Raissa Maritain.
Pantheon. Price: \$3.50.

Raissa Maritain and her husband, Jacques (who does the introduction) are in an excellent position to present these extracts from some of Bloy's writings. It was to him they turned in suicidal desperation

in their search for a *raison d'être*, a hungering of the soul for the Truth which is God—the Absolute. Leon Bloy's words will come as a startling shock to American Catholics. His deliberate self-humiliations and his denunciations of the smugness and complacency of his fellows permit of no compromise. He spent the greater part of his life in utter misery and destitution; yet he persisted in

his relentless viewpoint. For example, in his indictment of the Modern Christians:

"You have no idols in your homes, that is to say, you don't burn incense before wooden or stone images while adoring them. You don't blaspheme. The Name of the Lord is so far from your thoughts that it would not even enter your heads to 'take it in vain.' On Sundays you do God the overwhelming favor of appearing in His Church. It's more the thing to do than anything else would be, it sets a good example for the servants, and after all it makes no difference one way or another. You honor your fathers and mothers in the sense that you don't, from sunrise to sunset, bespatter their faces with gobs of filth. You do not kill either with the sword or with poison. That would be displeasing to mankind and might serve to scare your customers away. And finally, you don't go in for too scandalous debauchery, you don't tell lies as big as mountains, you don't rob along the highways, where you can so easily be waylaid yourselves, nor do you rob banks, which are always so admirably guarded. So much for God's Commandments."

More than 300 passages are included in the book, and a very fine index gives their French sources.

JOY ANDERSON.

The Problem of Love

THE MIND AND HEART OF LOVE

By M. C. D'Arcy, S. J.

Henry Holt.

Price: \$3.50.

There are few men and women who have not had the experience of conflict between the impulse of selflessness and the drive of selfishness; few, also, are they who have had the time

or the ability to face in a speculative manner the problem of these conflicting loves or to attempt to solve it. The problem may be stated simply in this fashion: is there a way to reconcile the apparently contradictory impulses of selflessness and selfishness? or must one or the other conquer and cast out the other?

Fr. D'Arcy has given much thought to the problem and this work gives us the fruit of his investigations. There are two purposes in the work that should be distinguished. There is, first, what might be called the documentation of the problem, the accumulation of the evidence of its existence. This purpose has been attained most brilliantly by the author. The reader is made keenly aware of the existence of the two loves, their pervading presence throughout the universe on every level of being, and the difficulties their conflicting tendencies give rise to.

The second purpose of the book is the presentation of a solution to the problem of love. That Fr. D'Arcy has attained his second purpose is questionable. In seeking the solution, the author was aided by intellectual contact with several others who were engaged in a similar pursuit. Much of the book is devoted to an exposition of their opinions; the author, then, shows how his own thought was developed through a criticism of these opinions. This is an ancient

and fruitful method of enquiry. Some of the authors discussed are: de Rougemont (*Passion and Society*), Nygren (*Eros and Agape*), Rousselot (*Probleme de l'Amour au Moyen Age*), and Hunter Guthrie (*Introduction au Probleme de l'Histoire de la Philosophie*).

Fr. D'Arcy leans heavily on the contribution of Hunter Guthrie, although he brings in elements of Rousselot's theory that are, in fact, incompatible with Guthrie's thesis. The one element of Rousselot's explanation that would ultimately solve the problem, the Thomistic theory of the relation of the whole and the part, is passed over lightly on the authority of Gilson, who chose to ignore St. Thomas' clear indication of his own adherence to this solution and suggested that the doctrine of men and angels as images of God was the key to the solution, as though there were a choice between the two.

It might seem that the whole problem is of little practical value and of interest only to philosophers. This is far from true; the problem has urgent practical applications, especially in the spiritual life and in political life. Recent controversies over the relation of the individual to the common good, the human person to society, are fundamentally resolvable into this question of love. There is, in fact, urgent need for a clear solution to the problem of love which would manifest the possibility of reconciling the apparently contradictory impulses of love. Fr. D'Arcy has contributed much toward a clarification of the problem and its solution.

JAMES M. EGAN, O.P.

The Story of Fatima

OUR LADY OF LIGHT

Translated from the French of
Chanoine C. Barthas and
Pere G. Da Fonseca, S.J.
Bruce. Price: \$2.50.

For the third time in less than a hundred years, our Blessed Mother revealed herself on earth to repeat substantially the same message to the world. "MEN MUST CORRECT THEIR FAULTS AND ASK PARDON FOR THEIR SINS. IN ORDER THAT THEY NO LONGER OFFEND OUR LORD, WHO IS ALREADY TOO MUCH OFFENDED . . . CONTINUE EVERY DAY TO SAY THE BEADS." Her intermediaries in each case at La Salette, Lourdes, and in our own century, at Fatima, Portugal, were all humble peasant children. With increasing urgency she has insisted that the world repent for its sins, particularly for sins of the flesh.

This book with its authoritative description should help increase the already spreading devotion to our Lady of Fatima. Portugal has already shown the modern world, had it only eyes to see the truth, the blessings which come to a nation that returns to love and devotion to Christ and Mary. Within twenty-five years it has been transformed from a chaotic, revolution-torn, persecution-ridden country, to a peaceful, stable nation imbued with the spirit of Catholicism in its social, economic, and political life.

It remains to each of us individually to accept in our own lives the message of Fatima, and do penance for ourselves and for our fellows.

DOROTHY WILLOCK

The Green Revolution

RECLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

By Willis Dwight Nutting.

Berliner & Lanigan,

Price: \$3.00.

The man who was beating himself on the head with a hammer, stopped to remark to his friend, "If you have nothing but negative criticism to offer, please keep quiet." A few moments later he was carried away screaming. This lunatic is brother to the less violent individual who counters every criticism of the present social order with the same remark. In both their tortured minds is embedded the notion that some inexorable force, law, or authority demands that they keep on doing what they're doing. They both fail to realize that if they but stopped, things would show a rather startling improvement. The reasons for stopping our self-inflicted economic mayhem, the manner of stopping, and the positive moves that should occupy our resultant sabbath, are the subject of this book.

Mr. Nutting advocates a Green Revolution as a means toward regaining the human liberty we have lost under the present System, and as the sole means of forestalling the otherwise inevitable state of tyranny toward which we move. I have seldom seen the case for a decentralist, agrarian and craft economy, so logically and unemotionally developed. He first points out to us very convincingly that specialization in methods of work has created an abnormal interdependence. We are all consumers dependent not upon a man or upon a class, but upon a System. So involved has this interdependence become, that no one can state with certainty just who or what controls it. The rich as well as the poor are slaves to these wheels within wheels. They are equally dependent for their supper upon that mad magic that puts the food on our tables, and the clothes on our backs. Consequently:

... the proper function of the System is our greatest concern. It must work or we perish. Our instinct of self-preservation demands that we make it work. Nothing else is important. Our existence on this earth depends on it. Nothing else—personal preferences, the hopes, ambitions and plans of individuals, *and even human rights*—must take second place, for what are preferences, or hopes or rights if we are not alive to enjoy them?

This state of affairs, Mr. Nutting insists, does not make for human freedom. The organization of one class against the other fails to advance human freedom one iota, and he gives as evidence the strongly organized unionism of Germany and Italy offering but slight resistance to dictatorship when it arose. My own evidence is the present seeking after legislation by our American labor unions, which if granted, would as Mr. Belloc prophesied make one class *under law* subservient to the other. To perpetuate the System, the American worker at present would gladly accept well-paid servility to freedom, by their own testimony.

At great length, the author suggests ways and means to bring about a quiet revolution which would be characterized by more and more people becoming less dependent upon the System and more dependent upon their own skill of hand, or, at least, dependent upon a small local cooperating community. This is the Green Revolution similar in most details with that advocated by Chesterton, Belloc, McNabb, Maurin, Borsodi, and company. It would be essentially a land and crafts movement.

Agreeing wholeheartedly with Mr. Nutting's diagnosis and treatment of the social problem, I must say his optimism is greater than mine. Not because he hopes to see results, for so do I, but because he implies that the impetus for such a movement can be forthcoming from men's innate desire for human freedom. I do not believe that this is strong enough today to hope for any such heroic manifestation. Human freedom is an expression without meaning until qualified by an answer to the question, "Freedom to do what?" Without the proper motives and admirable desires of Mr. Nutting, many men might consider his ultimate community a deprivation of that licence they now enjoy as slaves. His optimism is the same as that of which our founding fathers were guilty, and resulted in their idealism hardly outliving themselves.

Apart from Christianity as it is interpreted and lived out by the Church of Christ, men will find themselves ill-equipped to achieve or maintain any social order compatible with dignified freedom for the person, for this civic liberty can only come as by-product to a Christian religious life. The self-denial, altruism, and hopefulness necessary to make the Green Revolution possible could only be the natural consequence of supernatural virtue. Man must first come to realize that he is ultimately neither dependent upon a System, nor his own productivity, but upon the Providence of God. Freedom thus sought would be the kind of freedom which spreads itself lavishly among common brothers under the room of a Beneficent Father, where neither ambition for one's own ends, nor envy for another man's possessions can get a foothold. We need not wait upon the day when all men are of this persuasion but certainly the first heroic steps can only be taken by men Calvary-bound.

Mr. Nutting's Green Revolution integrated with 1947 Christianity is the social dish for our famished age. The Revolution, however, will not be an end, but an effect.

Reclamation of Independence is a valuable contribution to those libraries which we hope will soon be discarded as less attractively fertile than compost heaps. Until that day the book itself will give you some delight as a thing well done. It is the first from Messrs. Berliner & Lanigan and the beautiful format leads us to believe that these gentlemen share Mr. Nutting's enthusiasm for craft skillfully executed. Copies may be ordered direct from the publishers.

EDWARD WILLOCK

TO OUR READERS

If you like INTEGRITY and know of others who might like it too, will you send us their names (as many of you have done already), so we can send them our announcement? You'll find a form on the reverse side for your convenience.

Many thanks,

JOHN MURPHY

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

THE HOLY EUCHARIST by Rev. Jose Guadalupe Trevino. Bruce \$2.50.

A devotional and doctrinal treatise of fifteen chapters on the Blessed Sacrament with a short but helpful doctrinal appendix.

OPERATION UNIVERSITY, Edited by Martin McLaughlin and Henry Briefs. National Catholic Youth Council \$1.00.

A report and analysis of the World Student Congress held in Prague last summer, the first post-war Pax Romana International Congress, and the December meeting of the Chicago Student Conference.

MY IDEAL—JESUS, SON OF MARY by E. Neubert, S. M.
Maryhurst Press, Kirkwood, Mo. (pamphlet)

This little handbook of devotion to the Blessed Mother isn't just another pious exercise in her honor. It amounts to a way of life for those who adopt it wholeheartedly. It has been followed by priests and religious for many years. Recently the Popes have recommended its adoption by lay people, especially those engaged in the apostolate. The author says "My Ideal" is a simplified popular version of the teaching of William Joseph Chaminade, founder of the Society of Mary, on Mary's part in our redemption. Basically, it is the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary first outlined by Bl. Grignon de Montfort, whose canonization will take place on July 20 of this year.

CATHOLIC ACTION IN THE MYSTICAL BODY by Tromp
Berliner and Lanigan, Nevada City, California. 15c.

HIS WILL IS OUR PEACE by Gerald Vann, O.P. Sheed and Ward \$1.25.

Tension within ourselves diminishes as attention to God augments. Peace is not the absence of trouble, interior or exterior, but the identification of wills, of our will with God's. Father Vann would teach us the art of surrendering to Him gracefully and of living constantly in His presence.

The FRIENDSHIP HOUSE summer school of Catholic Interracial Techniques will hold two sessions this year at St. Joseph's Farm, Marathon City, Wisconsin, July 6 to 19 and July 27 to August 9. Write James Quinlan, at the farm, for details.

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Undoubtedly Catholic Action is what the world needs, but not all action by Catholics is Catholic Action: to get the real thing you must begin with Catholic thought.

All readers of *Integrity*, we presume, know this. Indeed anyone who stops to think must realize that the diagnosis has to come before the treatment.

WHAT AILS MANKIND

by GUSTAVE THIBON

\$1.75

is a diagnosis of the sickness of the world, and suggests what remedies should be applied.

ESSAYS IN RECONSTRUCTION

edited by DOM RALPH RUSSELL, O.S.B.

\$2.00

consists of essays by five Benedictines and four laymen and gives more light on the same subject, as well as constructive ideas on what can be done. It will not do to despise this book because it is written from the English point of view any more than it will do to neglect the one above because it is written by a Frenchman. The world's troubles can't be seen from too many points of view, provided all are Catholic. We suggest you read these two books and

DESIGNS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

by PETER MICHAELS

\$2.50

This last book is an attempt, says the author to "do the impossible—blue-print a Christian social order," an order which, as he says, can only be brought about by a spiritual revolution. It is a disturbing book, because obviously we *could* try out some of the author's ideas—there is nothing in the world to prevent us, except lack of courage.

Any of these books can be ordered through your book store or from us.

SHEED & WARD - 63 Fifth Avenue, New York 3

**IN OUR DAY AND AGE
UNENLIGHTENED
HEROISM IS NOT ENOUGH.**

PIUS XI

